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ABSTRACT

A pilot survey was conducted to determine if a network of existing libraries serving state education agencies would be of value in promoting general exchanges of information on educational programs and on state and federal education legislation. A 47-item questionnaire was sent to directors of legislative reference services and state libraries and commissioners of education in seven states. Results were collected by telephone. Because the responses were inconclusive with respect to the survey goal, a further study was recommended to discover how much coordination is needed and what the states are willing to do to promote a network. The questionnaire and a list of respondents are appended. (PF)

ED 096989

NETWORKING: WILL IT WORK FOR STATE EDUCATION LIBRARIES?

by

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U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

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NETWORKING: WILL IT WORK FOR STATE EDUCATION LIBRARIES?

Foreword

This paper was presented at both the Special Libraries Association annual meeting in Toronto, Ontario (Canada), on June 11, 1974, and the National Legislative Reference Librarians' meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on August 15, 1974. The National Legislative Conference and the National Society for State Legislators merged at that meeting and the group has been renamed the National Conference of State Legislators.

Dr. Russell B. Vlaanderen, Director of Research and Information Services of the Education Commission of the States, served as a consultant to us and, while we knew that this was not designed as a research study, we felt the survey served its purpose as an information gathering tool.

Although at this time no organization that we know of has sought funds for further study along the lines of our recommendations in the final section of the paper, there are two actions which have resulted in part from our study:

1. One state included in the survey has taken steps to improve the working relationships of several of its library service agencies.
2. Another state introduced at the annual meeting of the Education Commission of the States a resolution which is in the appendix.

--September 11, 1974.

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Introduction

The endlessly accelerating demand for fast accurate information to be used in designing educational legislation or programs has created greater and greater strains on libraries. In recognition of this situation, we began to look for alternatives or better ways to provide our services. After several discussions, we decided to explore the following hypothesis:

THAT, A network of existing libraries now serving state education agency personnel would be of value in promoting general exchanges of information on educational programs and in promoting exchanges of information on state and federal legislation pertaining to education.

In order to confirm or deny this hypothesis we decided to conduct a pilot study of several state governments to determine what libraries already exist with responsibility for services to state education agency personnel and legislators. In each library we

attempted to identify the internal structure, holdings, staffing, degree of access to and the availability of computer facilities, types of and similarities of services provided, specific information needs in the area of legislation on education and whether a need for a network of libraries serving state education agencies was perceived. This is the report of that study and is divided into five sections, namely: introduction, methodology, survey findings, evaluation of study and recommendations, and appendix.

Methodology

Questionnaire preparation:

A questionnaire was prepared to survey a sampling of states. The questions on the survey form resulted from the scanning of various library questionnaires already in use, a computer search of Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) files, a review of relevant documents and discussions with other librarians. Since we were unable to locate an existing instrument which would allow us to survey both legislative reference services and libraries, we developed 47 questions which we felt appropriate.

Because the questions had not been validated, it was obvious that the survey had two basic goals. First, to test the questions specifically to determine if they were properly constructed to elicit the desired information. Second, to gather the information from the states involved in the sample.

State Selection:

The nature of the survey made it desirable and possible to select states in which one of us had a personal contact. This guaranteed a high degree of cooperation and some candid observations. Although all personnel in the states surveyed expressed a willingness to be identified, for the purposes of this report all states and respondents are anonymous.

Choice of Respondents:

To determine the individual respondent in each state we contacted

- (1) the office of the commissioner of education or its equivalent,
- (2) the director of the state library and (3) the director of the legislative reference agency. In most cases the person contacted became the respondent; in a few cases that individual designated someone else.

Survey Technique:

Preliminary contact was made by telephone, the survey explained and cooperation requested. The questionnaire was then mailed, and a conference call arranged between ourselves and the respondent. The calls were held over a period of four days--a total of 17 calls from the seven states. Notes were taken during the conversation, and the conversations recorded. In addition, each respondent was requested to mail specific items including organization charts, budget, annual reports, statistical reports, brochure, statement on size and nature of holdings.

Survey Findings

Generally, findings are reported by state not by official position of respondents included in the survey. The variation in numbers of respondents and the fact that not all respondents answered all questions as well as contradictory statements made data tabulation difficult. The questionnaire was too comprehensive for full reporting in this paper. However, the salient points are covered in narrative form.

Since we are reporting only selected information pertaining to education, readers must keep in mind that this is not a total picture of any state library operation.

Structure:

Six of the seven directors of state libraries indicated that library services to state education agency personnel are their statutory responsibility. In actual practice, however, services are provided by the state library and other agencies within state government.

In five states the state library itself is physically separate from the state education agency. In one state a departmental library is operated and staffed by the state library and is located physically within the state education agency. A departmental library is operated by the state library but staffed by the state education agency in another state. Departmental

libraries exist independently in two states.

Supplementary services include statewide information systems in two states, and working collections housed within offices or units of the state education agency were identified in two other states. (1,2)^a

Two states surveyed regard responsibility for library service to state legislators as being held by the legislative reference service. In a third state respondents divide it equally between two legislative service agencies. In two states this responsibility is carried by the state library through establishment of a legislative reference section in the library. In another state one of two respondents indicated services are provided by both the state library and the legislative reference service while the other respondent gives the responsibility to the legislative reference service only. In the seventh state, the three respondents have a difference of opinion with each of the agencies named being cited. (4)

Despite disagreement concerning direct responsibility for library services to state legislators and education staff, all respondents stated that more than one library or agency provides information on educational topics. Services and materials overlap to some extent and are perceived as being complementary in nature but not competitive or consisting of unnecessary duplication. (5,6)

^a Throughout this section of the paper the number(s) in parentheses at the end of a paragraph, or several paragraphs, refers to the number of the question which the preceding paragraph(s) answer.

Degree of Automation:

All seven states have some automated information services. Six of the seven reported automation for senate and house legislation. Every state has, and all but three respondents were aware of, automation in the data processing center for state administration. One respondent suggested the question was unclear. (9)

Five of the seven states had a teletype immediately available to their libraries. Five states indicated that they have on-line terminals available to one of the libraries being surveyed, and two states indicated that they do not. Only one of the five does not anticipate adding an additional terminal. One of the two states with no on-line terminal anticipates its acquisition within five years. (10-14)

Information Services:

The need for information on educational legislation was stated unanimously. All persons reported needing information on legislation in other states, both from states in their own region and also nationwide. One respondent indicated a greater need for regional than for nationwide information. All respondents except two indicated they also need information on federal legislation. (25)

Personnel in all of the libraries indicated that their libraries attempt to provide information on federal and state legislation. When queried about how the information is actually obtained all

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indicated that there is no one source which provides all of the needed information. Acquiring the information is viewed as a continuous process of scanning newsletters, periodicals and publications of professional associations and organizations, such as, the Council of Chief State School Officers and the Council of State Governments. Personnel in five states specifically identified the publications of the Education Commission of the States as being very useful. In addition to printed sources, respondents indicated they contact congressional representatives, federal liaison officers and state education agency personnel. (26)

Networking:

Respondents were asked if they would see any value in a network of libraries serving state education agencies. Earlier in the survey, all respondents had indicated that all were cognizant of the benefits of library networking and all had at least limited experience as a network participant. All indicated that their libraries are already part of an existing network--either intrastate, interstate or both. Questions were raised by several respondents regarding the quality of the libraries serving state education agency personnel. One person questioned whether college and university education libraries aren't stronger than state libraries. Another suggested that a committee explore the question of networking. Several commented that networking would be very difficult since "every state is different." While all comments were generally favorable, networking is clearly seen as a very complex system requiring serious consideration of a

large number of factors. (19,34)

Evaluation of Study, Conclusions and Recommendations

Technique and Questionnaire:

The telephone conference contributed both to the high degree of response on the questionnaire and the enthusiasm with which people replied. Respondents appreciated the opportunity to clarify phraseology of the questionnaire. A problem was created by the poor technology of recording the telephone conversations.

The questionnaire with some modifications could be used to survey some or all of the remaining fifty states. The supporting materials received from the states is of substantial value in clarifying the library operations within the state and in raising additional questions which need further study.

Conclusion:

The evidence was inconclusive in supporting or denying the hypothesis.

Recommendations:

Since there is little coordination either intrastate or interstate of library services to legislators and state education personnel, it is recommended:

1. That answers be found to three questions: What effect does this limited coordination have on effectiveness of information services within state government? What resources would each state be willing to make available for coordination? To what

extent is each state willing to modify its structure to promote coordination?

2. That any further study involve an exploration of the relationship between the libraries surveyed and state central service agencies or whoever maintains the state data processing center.
3. That further study be made to clarify the discrepancies noted in the survey findings within a state.
4. That any further study be assumed by an agency with resources and personnel to address the problem on a national level with due consideration being given to the latest report of the National Commission on Library Information Science.

Due to the scope of the problem we feel it cannot be handled without a major commitment of staff and time. This is a pilot study, and it is recommended that further research on the question of networking for state education libraries should be undertaken.

GMN-PAT:g

2-26-74

APPENDIX I

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES
and the
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONA Questionnaire on Library Services

(We realize that due to the tremendous variation in states all questions may not be applicable to your situation. However, where appropriate, please check the proper response(s) for each question. Use additional paper, if necessary, and we would appreciate any supplemental reports or material giving more details.)

Part I--STRUCTURE OF LIBRARY SERVICES

1. Within your state government, where does responsibility for library services to state education agency personnel lie?*

- a. ☐ state education agency departmental library
b. ☐ state library agency
c. ☐ information retrieval system
d. ☐ other (please explain) _____

What is the exact name of the organization or library?

e. _____

2. If the state library agency provides service to the education agency, please indicate the structure used:

- a. ☐ departmental library--operated and staffed by the state library agency and located physically within the state education agency
b. ☐ department of the state library agency which is located apart from the state education agency
c. ☐ other (please explain) _____

3. Within your state government, where does responsibility for library services to school district personnel lie?

- a. ☐ state library agency
b. ☐ statewide information retrieval system
c. ☐ intermediate or other cooperative service units
d. ☐ other (please explain) _____

*Please add an organizational chart, budget, and annual report.

A. Questionnaire on Library Services

4. Within your state government, where does responsibility for service to state legislators lie?
- a. ☐ independent legislative council
 - b. ☐ legislative reference service
 - c. ☐ state library agency
 - d. ☐ other (please explain) _____

5. If your state provides service through more than one library or information service, who provides legislators with information on educational topics?

6. To what extent do collections and services overlap?

7. Do you know who the ECS commissioners in your state are? _____
If yes, please name them _____

8. Do you give service to ECS commissioners? _____
9. What information services within your state government are automated?
- a. ☐ senate legislation
 - b. ☐ house legislation
 - c. ☐ educational information
 - d. ☐ data processing centers for state administration
 - e. ☐ other
 - f. ☐ none
10. What terminals or computer facilities are available to your library operation?
- a. ☐ TWX
 - b. ☐ on line terminal
 - c. ☐ other
 - d. ☐ none

A Questionnaire on Library Services

11. Who has primary use of the equipment listed in question 10?

- a. ☐ library
- b. ☐ central service
- c. ☐ other

If a library, which library? _____

12. If equipment is maintained by state central services, what percentage of time is allotted for library use?

13. Is equipment and software you are using available for use by other state departmental libraries? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, which one(s)? _____

14. Do you anticipate the addition of a computer terminal to your library?

Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes,

- a. ☐ within one year
- b. ☐ within two years
- c. ☐ within five years

Part II--SERVICES

15. Please indicate the services which your library provides.

- a. ☐ cataloging and classification
- b. ☐ circulation
- c. ☐ quick reference
- d. ☐ in depth reference
- e. ☐ telephone reference
- f. ☐ routing new journals
- g. ☐ interlibrary loans
- h. ☐ acquisitions lists
- i. ☐ compilation of bibliographies on request (manually)
- j. ☐ reproduction or duplication of hard copy materials
- k. ☐ reproduction or duplication of microforms
- l. ☐ documents depository for state documents
- m. ☐ information for federal legislation
- n. ☐ information for state legislation
- o. ☐ other (please explain) _____

16. Which of the services listed in question 15 are automated?

A Questionnaire on Library Services

17. Which of the services listed in question 15 are provided for you by other libraries?

18. Which are cooperative services with another library?

19. Does your library participate in an existing network? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, which one(s)? _____

20. Do you know about ERIC? Yes ___ No ___

21. Is any part of the ERIC system included in your library? (Specify).

- a. ___ RIE journal
- b. ___ CIJE journal
- c. ___ ERIC microfiche (ED documents)
- d. ___ ERIC microfiche (RJ articles)
- e. ___ manual searches of ERIC
- f. ___ computer searches of ERIC
- g. ___ none

22. Where are the automated services in questions 9 and 16 located?

By whom are they used? _____

What is the basis for expansion of such services, if projected?

Part III--USER GROUPS

23. In general, what type of users do you have?

- a. ___ administrative management
 - b. ___ subject specialists
 - c. ___ legislators
 - d. ___ college and university students
 - e. ___ other (please specify) _____
- _____

A Questionnaire on Library Services

24. In your opinion, what is the primary use of the information you provide?
- a. ☐ professional growth
 - b. ☐ directly related to user job responsibility
 - c. ☐ long range planning
 - d. ☐ to design legislation
 - e. ☐ justification
 - f. ☐ other (please explain) _____
25. Do your users need information on educational legislation?
- a. ☐ in-state information only
 - b. ☐ other states, regional
 - c. ☐ other states, national
 - d. ☐ federal
 - e. ☐ none
26. How do you currently gather information on educational legislation?
- _____
- _____
- _____
27. Under what kind of time constraints do your users operate?
- a. ☐ very tight (needed information yesterday)
 - b. ☐ tight (really need information today)
 - c. ☐ normal (need information within the week)
 - d. ☐ unusual (need information within 30-90 days)
 - e. ☐ other (explain) _____

Part IV--STAFFING

28. Professional staff is defined as those with MLS degree or equivalent experience and/or supervisory and administrative responsibility who work independently. Clerical staff is defined as support personnel.

What is your staff size? (Please insert appropriate numbers.)

- a. ☐ full-time professional positions
 - b. ☐ part-time professional positions
 - c. ☐ full-time clerical positions
 - d. ☐ part-time clerical positions
 - e. ☐ volunteer professional persons
 - f. ☐ volunteer clerical persons
29. Is any clerical work for the benefit of the library performed in another unit, i.e., word processing centers, typing pools?

If yes, where and percentage of total work load accomplished by each?

A Questionnaire on Library Services

30. Does the library normally purchase part time professional help?

If yes, how much time or how frequently done? _____

What percentage of the budget? _____

Staff training:

31. Indicate years and type of experience of the person directly in charge of the library.

32. Does any of the staff have (indicate the number)

a. _____ automated data processing training or experience?

b. _____ automated information retrieval training or experience?

33. What positions on the staff are held by persons with

a. automated data processing training or experience?

b. automated information retrieval training or experience?

34. Are you cognizant of networks of library services?

If so, which ones, and to what extent do you use them? _____

35. What is the greatest strength of your library operation? Why?

36. What is the weakest part of your library service? Why?

A Questionnaire on Library Services

Part V--SUMMARY

37. Is this material to be used only anonymously? Yes _____ No _____
38. May we quote the state? Yes _____ No _____
39. May we cite the organization? Yes _____ No _____
40. May we use your position title? Yes _____ No _____
41. Are you supplying the following separately as supplemental reports to this questionnaire?
- | | | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| a. organizational chart? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| b. budget | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| c. annual report | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| d. statistical report | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| e. brochure | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| f. statement on size and nature of holdings | Yes _____ | No _____ |
42. Is your operation primarily responsible for providing
- | |
|-----------------------|
| a. _____ materials or |
| b. _____ information |
43. Other comments:

Name of person responding _____

Title _____

Full name of agency _____

State _____

Date _____

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1-17-74

APPENDIX II

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(Includes only those items which contributed directly to this project.)

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RESPONDENTS ON MILLER/TUPPER SURVEY

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Mr. Cecil Beach
State Librarian
Florida State Library
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Tallahassee, FL 32304

Mr. Shelley Boone
Deputy Commissioner of Education
Florida Department of Education
Tallahassee, FL 32304

Mrs. Ethel Crockett
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Mr. Lyle Eberhart
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ADDITIONAL PEOPLE RECEIVING MILLS/TUPPER SURVEY RESULTS

This letter, with attached enclosures, was sent to all respondents and to the following people, on September 11, 1974:

Mr. J. Arnold Bricker
Staff Director
Senate Research Center
State Capitol
Olympia, WA 98504

}

Mr. Timothy P. Burke
Research Director
House Office of Program Research
State Capitol
Olympia, WA 98504

Mr. Steve Plumb
Director, Legislative Reference Library
State Capitol
St. Paul, MN 55155

Mr. Richard Cheski
Deputy State Librarian and
Assistant Commissioner
Colorado State Library
1352 Lincoln Street
Denver, CO 80203

Mr. Kurt Keeley
Acting Director
Colorado State Library
1562 Lincoln Street
Denver, Colorado 80203

Mr. Bricker and Mr. Burke did not participate in the survey because of the legislative schedule, but their responses were covered by Mrs. Reynolds.

Mr. Steve Plumb has replaced Ray Lindquist in the Minnesota Reference Library.

Mr. Richard Cheski has replaced James Meeks at the Colorado State Library.

Kurt Keeley responded along with Mr. Meeks of the Colorado State Library.

RESOLUTION IX

- WHEREAS, The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science is preparing a national plan for the further development of library and information services; and
- WHEREAS, The state library agencies in the several states are working on their several responsibilities toward making statewide systems of library service available; and
- WHEREAS, The development of library and information services of all kinds are of the utmost importance to all education; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, By the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Education Commission of the States, held June 20-22, 1974, in Miami, Florida, that the Education Commission of the States goes on record, expressing its continuing concern for library development; and
- RESOLVED, That the Education Commission of the States keep its members regularly informed of progress and problems in this regard.

Committee Disposition: Approved with Amendment

FINAL DISPOSITION: Adopted at the annual meeting of the Education Commission of the States, June 22, 1974.